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SECRETARY'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ***Program and Application Information***

Secretary Stephen R. Pritchard, of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, in partnership with the Secretary's Advisory Group on Environmental Education (SAGEE), and the Massachusetts Environmental Trust, announced today they will be accepting nominations for the 2006 Secretary's Award for Excellence in Environmental Education.

All schools offering environmental programs are encouraged to apply. In previous years, schools presented with the Excellence in Environmental Education award have offered programs such as environmental studies, AP Biology, mercury thermometer exchange programs, recycling and beautification projects, horticulture education, wetland investigation, air quality investigation and reservoir arts projects.

"I strongly believe that educating our youth about the environment is a critical part of any comprehensive curriculum," Pritchard said. "In the past, we've seen that there have been many outstanding programs being offered in our Commonwealth, and we expect - and look forward - to receiving another round of quality applications this year."

The deadline for nominations is at the close of business on **March 15th**. Nominations will be reviewed the last two weeks of March and notifications will be sent out at the end of the month. Included in the notification will be an invitation to attend a formal award ceremony at the State House in the spring.

Applications may be obtained by contacting meg.colclough@state.ma.us or by accessing EOE's homepage: <http://www.mass.gov/envir>, (top of page, "Conduct Business" and then Environmental Education).

The Secretary's Award is open to any school (K- 12) as an inclusive effort to hear about the many outstanding environmental education programs in our schools across the Commonwealth.

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